

Customer No.: 31561
Application No.: 10/710,347
Docket NO.: 13329-US-PA

REMARKS

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 5, and 8-12 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e), as being anticipated by Yamaguchi (U.S. Pat. Pub. No.2004/0105173). The Office Action also rejected claims 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being unpatentable over Yamaguchi in view of Hirakawa (U.S. Pat. No. 5,724,193).

It is noted with great appreciation that the Examiner considers the subject matter of claims 13-16 as being allowable over the art of record, and considers that claims 2-4, 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have canceled rejected claims 1, 10-12 and have amended claims 2, 3 and 4 into independent form by incorporating all of the limitations of the base claim 1, which renders the rejections set forth to claims 1 and 10-12 moot.

Claim 5 depends on allowable claim 4 and should also be allowable, and claims 6 and 7 depend on claim 5, which are also allowable. Claims 8 and 9 are amended to depend on allowable claim 2 and should also be allowable.

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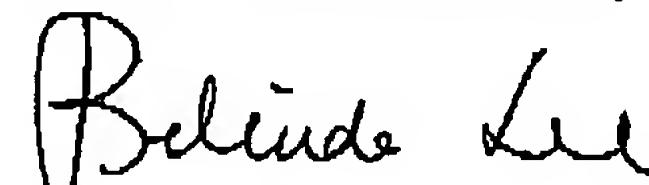
CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is believed that the pending claims 2-9 and 13-16 are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

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